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Justin Trudeau Still Best to Lead Country, say Canadians (39%), Ahead of O'Toole (25%) and Singh (23%)

Canadians Feel Trudeau Safe Bet to Manage During Tough Economic Times (34%), but Will Say Anything to Be Elected (44%)

Toronto, ON, August 20, 2021 — At the outset of a snap election called by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, new Ipsos polling done exclusively for Global News reveals the public's views on who is best to lead, and what Canadians think about this election's candidates to lead the country into a post-COVID future.

Trudeau Best Candidate for PM

Most Canadians (39%) feel that Justin Trudeau is the federal party leader best fit to be the Prime Minister of Canada. Around a quarter see Erin O'Toole (25%) and Jagmeet Singh (23%) as the best candidates, while Canadians expressed much lower levels of confidence in Yves-François Blanchet (4%, 18% in Quebec) and Annamie Paul (4%). Six percent said they did not know or refused to comment. Notably, based on current Ipsos polling data, Trudeau and Singh both poll ahead of overall vote intention for their parties (i.e., 36% of Canadians intend to vote for the Liberal party, and 39% say Trudeau is the best fit to be the Prime Minister), while O'Toole, Blanchet, and Paul trail behind.

	Vote Intention (Party)	Best Candidate for PM
Trudeau	36%	39%
O'Toole	31%	25%
Singh	20%	23%
Blanchet	6%	4%
Paul	5%	4%

Trudeau received consistent support across most regions in Canada, including Quebec (48%), Ontario (40%), BC (39%), and Atlantic Canada (38%). By contrast, those in the prairie provinces were far more skeptical of Trudeau's leadership (AB 25%, SK/MB 23%), favouring O'Toole (44% of Albertans and 35% of those from Saskatchewan and Manitoba feel O'Toole would make the best Prime Minister). Singh is significantly more popular among urban voters (25%) compared to rural voters (11%), as well as younger voters (18-34 32%, 35-54 22%, 55+ 17%), while O'Toole was more likely to be selected as top pick among older voters (18-34 16%, 35-54 24%, 55+ 31%),

A Safe Bet in Uncertain Times

The prospect of a federal election at the outset of Canada's fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has likely left many Canadians feeling jaded; after the pandemic's ravaging of the economy, the healthcare system, and national morale, 35% of Canadians feel that none of the federal party leaders

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up for election will make things more affordable, and 38% feel that none of the candidates will keep their election promises.

However, Trudeau emerges as the top leader who Canadians feel will best represent the country on the world stage (39%), can manage Canada during tough economic times (34%), and has the right temperament and maturity to be the Prime Minister (34%). Comparatively weak leadership among the Conservatives coupled with pandemic-related exhaustion may mean that Canadians are less likely to want to make significant changes to the status quo. In fact, across the candidates, Trudeau leads on all 16 positive traits. While O’Toole is the candidate with many of the second highest scores, he does not lead on any positive traits.

That said, 44% of Canadians feel Justin Trudeau will say anything to get elected, 36% feel he has a hidden agenda, and just 28% feel he is someone they can trust. Notably, just one quarter (24%) feel he will keep his election promises. While Canadians may not wish to make a major leadership change this election, they may also be wary of Trudeau’s motives for calling an election.

Comparing O’Toole and Singh, O’Toole is seen as the candidate with the best handle on taxpayer spending (21% feel he will do so wisely), managing during tough economic times (22%), and representing Canada on the world stage (20%), but Singh is seen as more sincere (22%) – 27% feel O’Toole will say anything to get elected, compared to 7% for Singh. Singh is also the candidate seen as on par with Trudeau (30%) in protecting the interests of cultural, religious, and other minorities in Canada (29%), compared to 13% for O’Toole.

In comparing these perceptions with recent Ipsos polling on issue Canadians care about the most, sentiment on choice for best Prime Minister and on each of the candidates is given a bit more colour. The most recent Ipsos polling has found that healthcare, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the economy are the top three issues that are the most related to how Canadians will vote in September. It is therefore unsurprising that Canadians may wish to stick with the candidate who has navigated the country through the pandemic and provided economic support to struggling Canadians as the end may still be far from view.

Party Leader Attributes: Which Major Federal Party Leader is Someone Who Is/Will...

	Trudeau	O’Toole	Singh	Paul	Blanchet	None of them
Will keep their election promises	24%	16%	16%	3%	3%	38%
Make things more affordable	22%	18%	20%	2%	3%	35%
You can trust	28%	16%	17%	3%	3%	34%
Spend taxpayer money wisely	25%	21%	15%	2%	2%	33%
Means what they say	25%	17%	20%	3%	4%	32%
Gives me hope about the future	27%	18%	18%	4%	3%	30%
Is sincere	26%	15%	22%	4%	4%	29%
Provide open, responsible, and ethical government	27%	18%	21%	3%	3%	28%
Whose values represent my own	28%	19%	19%	3%	4%	27%
Best to manage during tough economic times	34%	22%	13%	3%	2%	26%
Get things done	31%	21%	16%	3%	3%	26%
Fight for the middle class	27%	18%	24%	3%	3%	25%

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Has a hidden agenda	36%	26%	8%	3%	4%	24%
Wants to lead Canada for the right reasons	30%	20%	20%	3%	3%	24%
Protect the interests of cultural, religious, and other minorities in Canada	30%	13%	29%	3%	2%	23%
Has the right temperament and maturity to be PM	34%	20%	17%	3%	3%	23%
In over their head	38%	17%	8%	13%	3%	20%
Best to represent Canada on the world stage	39%	20%	15%	3%	3%	20%
Say anything to get elected	44%	27%	7%	2%	3%	18%

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 13 and 16, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of n = 2,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. A sample of n = 1,501 was interviewed online, via the Ipsos I-Say panel and non-panel sources, and respondents earn a nominal incentive for their participation. A sample of n = 500 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed by live-interview telephone interviewers by landline and cellphone, using random-digit dialing. Quotas and weighting were employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos polls which include non-probability sampling is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. Ipsos abides by the disclosure standards established by the CRIC, found here:

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<https://ipsosintelligence.ca/canadiancontext/>

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